

September 2017

Senior Health and Wellness Newsletter

Kentucky Department for Aging and Independent Living



Your Nutritional Risk - Malnutrition Awareness Week

What is Malnutrition?

Malnutrition is an inadequate intake of protein and or energy over prolonged periods of time that affect both underweight and over weight individuals.

NUTRITION IMBALANCE THAT AFFECTS EVERYONE!

It includes the presence of two or more of the following characteristics

- ⇒ Not eating enough
- ⇒ Weight loss without trying
- ⇒ Loss of muscle tissue on body
- ⇒ Loss of fat tissue on body
- ⇒ Fluid accumulation or swelling
- ⇒ Increased weakness

How big is this Crisis?

- Up to 1 out of 2 older adults are at risk for malnutrition
- Up to 60% of hospitalized older adults may be malnourished
- Malnutrition can increase how long someone is in the hospital by 4-6 days
- Malnutrition cost the US 51.3 billion dollars
- There has been a 300% increase in healthcare cost that can be attributed to poor nutritional status.



How is Kentucky doing?

In Kentucky 17% of our clients who eat at the Senior Centers are at nutritional risk and 67% of our clients who receive Home Delivered Meals are at nutritional risk. **Being at nutritional risk can increase your chances of being malnourished.**

Who does Malnutrition effects?

EVERYONE! Especially our children and those over 60 years of age. We must all realize that malnutrition does not care how much money you have, or how dedicated your family is at helping with your care. It does not care if you have plenty of food in your home or if you are active and independent. Malnutrition can happen to those individuals who have enough money, who have food, who eats three (3) meals a day.

What are we doing in our programs to help combat malnutrition?

- We conduct Nutritional Risk Screens on clients in our programs and if a client is screened at nutritional risk, he/she will be referred to a Dietitian or a physician.
- We provide nutritious meals at Senior Centers to anyone 60 years or older.
- Clients who are unable to attend the Senior Center can be screened for eligibility to receive a home delivered meal. There is a waiting list in most regions.
- We are currently partnering with the Kentucky Hospital Association to provide education on Malnutrition to hospitals across the state. Early diagnosis can help improve your health.
- We are increasing education on Malnutrition within our programs to increase awareness



References:

<http://www.defeatmalnutrition.today>

http://www.nutritioncare.org/Continuing_Education/Programs/Malnutrition_Awareness/Malnutrition/

What can you do?

- Pay attention to your own nutritional health and know the symptoms.
- Pay attention to other seniors around you.
- Ask other seniors to come to the center to eat and socialize.
- Be truthful when answering questions from the nutrition screen each year.

You are at risk! Now what?

- Adjust your diet to increase protein rich foods and eat regularly.
- Follow up by seeing a Registered Dietitian and or Physician.
- Exercise to build muscle and improve strength. Ask your doctor to see a Physical Therapist.
- Consider drinking an oral nutrition supplement.
- Eat regularly and avoid skipping meals.
- Limit empty calories like soft drinks and sweets.

HOTLINE:

Find a Dietitian online - <http://www.eatright.org/find-an-expert>

Aging and Disability Resource Center 877-925-0037

Nutrition Hotline 1-800-366-1655

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<http://chfs.ky.gov/dail/default.htm>